

Project I.D. No 189

NAME: Sato, Shinji John DATE OF BIRTH: 1897 PLACE OF BIRTH: Chiba-ken  
Age: 78 Sex: M Marital Status: M Education: Grammar school

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1911 Age: 14 M.S. S Port of entry: San Fran.  
Occupation/s: 1. Schoolboy 2. Ranch foreman 3. Farmer  
Place of residence: 1. Sacramento 2. Imperial Valley 3. Sacramento  
Religious affiliation: Christian church  
Community organizations/activities: \_\_\_\_\_

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Pinedale  
Name of relocation center: Poston, Arizona Names of bank/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dispensation of property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held in camp: 1. Carpenter 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Jobs held outside of camp: \_\_\_\_\_  
Left camp to go to: Denver, Colorado

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1946  
Address/es: 1. Sacramento 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Religious affiliation: Christian church  
Activities: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewer: Takarabe Date: 7/25/75 Place: Sacramento  
Translator: Mabel Hall

T: Please tell me your name.

S: My Japanese name is Sato, Shinji, but when I was naturalized it became John Sato.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Chiba Prefecture.

Q: What year were you born?

A: I was born in 1897.

Q: How old are you now?

A: I am 78 years old.

Q: Do you remember things you did in Japan when you were young?

A: I remember some. I came to this country when I was 14. I grew up by my mother until I was 14 years old. I came here when I was about to finish grammar school. My father was a boss of a fruit ranch in Napa, so I went there.

Q: What do you remember about things that happened when you were young?

A: When I was 5 years old my grandfather died. My uncle who was 29 years old and single died around that time. My grandfather used to carry me on his back when he burned charcoal. I remember picking silverberry riding on my grandfather's back.

Q: Were you brought up by your mother?

A: My father came to Hawaii as an immigrant around 1901. He was in Nappa at the time of 1906 earthquake. I heard that at the time of the earthquake many people from Chiba Prefecture escaped from San Francisco and came to my father's ranch. My father gave them food and work such as picking pears. His boss had a large dry yard, so my father let them work in the dry yard.

Q: What is a dry yard?

A: It is a place to dry fruits such as pear and peach. The boss bought the fruits which the neighbors brought to sell, and had women cut and dry them. Mr. Tule was the boss, and my father worked under him as a foreman. I was like a yobiyose, but I wasn't, as I came here with my father who came back to America. My mother brought me up from the time I was 3 years old until I was 14.

Q: Were you lonesome in Japan without your father?

A: I was only about 3 years old, so I didn't feel that way. I remember my mother had a hard time bringing up five children.

Q: Who was the oldest?

A: My older brother was. Then my older sister, and another older brother. I was the 4th one. The 5th one was my younger sister. Yasuko whom I brought here is the youngest daughter of my sister. She married Mr. Maeda from Hiroshima, and has been living in Sacramento for a few years. She visits us every week without fail.

Q: What kind of things were fun in Japan?

A: There wasn't anything especially fun. I have a picture taken with my two best friends in the neighborhood. We were three heroes who used to catch mudfish and crabs together day and night. Now there are no mudfish nor crabs. I went back to Japan three times, but every time I went there they came to see me, and we did the same things we used to do when we were little. One of them used to live in front of my house, and the other one lived on the side of my house. The one who lives in front of my house still lives there, as he is the heir. The other one became a carpenter, and as he was adopted he moved away from our neighborhood, but he came to see me whenever I went there. I was healthy and big for my age. I must have been good at school, for my teacher made me the class president all the time. Many people know me, and when I go back there they hold an alumni meeting for me. Ohana-san who went to school with me

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comes to the meeting, too. Like myself, she just went to grammar school. Then she married an immigrant and went to Hawaii. We were good friends. When I go back to Japan she always gives me \$1,000 as a parting gift. She is still well and alive. I grew up like that until I was 14 years old. Before my father came back, my uncle and my grandfather died, so my mother had a hard time.

Q: What kind of hardships did she have?

A: She had a hard time making a living. <sup>as</sup> We were very poor. I was lucky. My oldest sister was sent out to work, and my brother went to work at my uncle's. I was too young to work, so I stayed home with my mother and my younger sister. Until I became 14 years old I didn't go anywhere, and depended on my parents. When my father came home from America he brought some money back with him, so our lives became easier. My younger sister was a baby then, so she was loved. I was older, so my father didn't take me anywhere. He took my mother and my sister everywhere in Japan. My father died when he was 73 years old.

Q: Did you come here with your father when you were 14?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Did the whole family come here?

A: No, he brought just me. I made arrangements to call my older brother here by the following year. I got on a bicycle and went to the Japanese Association to get a certificate, and to the Japanese Consulate to put in a petition to call him. When my brother came here I was around 17 years old, so I was a grownup. When I came here I was a 14-year-old child, but in about a year I could speak English without any difficulty. I worked at a white family for a year, so I could speak English well enough to argue with my master. As my father was sickly, my brother and I decided to sent him back to Japan. For a year after my father left, his friend was the boss of the fruit ranch, but when I was 18 I became the boss.

As we thought there was not much future in the fruit ranch, we sold it and my brother and I went to Oregon to farm. We bought an Italian prune ranch in Salem, Oregon and worked hard. As I was a hard worker I paid off half of the ranch. Of course, my brother paid off half, also. When we paid off the ranch, my brother went to Sacramento to grow strawberry, and as he needed the capital, so I bought his share, and paid \$1,500 which was about the half of the estimated price. Both of us worked hard to grow strawberry.

Q: Did you come back from Oregon?

A: We bought land in Oregon, but there was not much work, so we went to Sacramento, Los Angeles, Imperial Valley and Arizona. I worked harder than anybody else everywhere I went. In the Imperial Valley, when the temperature was 115 degrees, the wind was like fire. In those days there was no paved roads. When the road was covered with dust, they poured water on the road, and used the part which was not wet. But when that side was covered with dust, they used the side where they poured water and dried. We transported melons and watermelons on horsebacks on dried part of the road.

In those days many people smuggled themselves from Mexico. My brother and I were the only ones who had passports, and the rest of them smuggled themselves from Mexico. Among them, a man named Nakamura was caught and was put in jail in Brawley. I visited him in the jail. I felt sorry for him as he was only 27 years old then. As it was his first offence he was sent back to Mexico. Later he wrote and told me that he was thinking about smuggling himself into America again. I think he was caught again and was deported to Japan as I didn't hear from him since. He was from a good family, but he came to America for some family reason. He was a poor young man. My brother and I had passports, but other 5 did not have passports.

We worked hard, but we made only \$5 for working all day. As soon as we finished our work in Imperial Valley, we went to Arizona. Phoenix was very hot. We worked at Mr. Yamamoto's ranch. He was a graduate of Waseda University, and was a frank and hearty man. He was growing on 200 acres using horses. He went shopping at grocery stores and other stores on horseback. My brother and I worked there about 20 days. We did piece work on contract, so we could not stop until the work was finished. One night, when we finished loading a 45lb load on the horse-drawn wagon around 10 o'clock at night, a big thunder storm came. The wind was so strong that it blew away the camp. It was lucky that I fell down on the ground, because a big tree flew over my head. When I went to the scene after it stopped thundering I found out that a big tree had fallen on top of the wagon. Luckily no men nor horses were injured. I was surprised to find my load under a fallen tree. It happened during 20 days I worked there.

I was only about 21, so I worked hard and came back to Nappa. I worked as a farm laborer for a year, but I quit it as there was much expense although I made good money. I became a foreman at Nappa, so I did everything.

Q: What did you grow in Imperial Valley?

A: A single man had a 40-acre cantaloupe ranch, so we grew them by contract. My brother and I left the camp at daybreak with bags on our backs, and worked in the field in 115 degree weather.

Before that we picked oranges in North Pomona. I liked to work silently but my brother liked better jobs, so he worked as a cook in Los Angeles. He caught the measles, so I went to Los Angeles and talked him into going to North Pomona and pick oranges with me as it was better for his health. We worked at Mr. Sasaki's camp in North Pomona till June.

Then my brother went to Imperial Valley. I was going there with him, but as I still owed some money on the land, and had to make some traveling expenses, I stayed behind for about a week to ten days. As I was good at pruning, I was asked to stay there and work. I was young, and wanted to make money, so I went to Imperial Valley. I think I made about \$10 a day. Seven of us went around 40 acres and could pick only about two crates of cantaloupe. The boss wanted 2 crates as he could sell them and make money. We worked hard for the boss disregarding our interest. Until about 10 o'clock at night everybody worked, some picking, some packing. We stayed there for about a month.

When the work was finished we went to Phoenix, Arizona. I was just a farm laborer. I came to America as a non-immigrant as my father was a foreman of a ranch. Non-immigrants had to go to their prefectoral office to get their passports. Immigrants had to get their passports from Kanagawa Prefectoral office. I received my passport from Chiba Prefectural office. I came to America with a passport of a non-immigrant, although I was just an immigrant.

I went back to Nappa, and succeeding my father became a foreman of the pear ranch. Then I went to Oregon and bought land. From there I went to Sacramento and helped my brother grow strawberry. Then I started going to school. I attended Healds College for a while.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I was about 25 years old then. When I was 27, Woodbridge Act (a resolution presented by a Congresswoman Woodbridge that no Japanese could enter America after July, 1924) passed the Congress. ~~in July 1924~~ My brother gave me some money to go back to Japan and meet his wife's niece as a prospective bride, so I went back to Japan after I quit Healds College. Things did not go well and I could not marry her, so I married my present wife and came back to America with her in 1922. I have been a farmer since then. I think it was better to be a farmer. When I had five children I decided to become an American. As my brother and I each had five children, my mother told <sup>us</sup> me that there was no place for us to live in Japan. My father bought house and land and prepared for us to go back to Japan, but my mother was a sensible woman who told us not to go back to Japan as there was no place for us to live there. That is why we bought this ranch 43 years ago. It was a poor ranch. My brother said 20 acres out of 40 acres is very bad, so I took the bad part and had my sons help me level the land after school and grew crops and made it into a nice ranch.

I gave much thought about settlers. When I was young I attended a naturalization class in adult education whenever I found time. I wanted to know what the immigrants from Europe did. Japanese immigrants came here to make money, but I thought it was no good if we do not become settlers. My brother bought 40 acres in front and I bought 40 acres in back. I leveled the land and sent my children to school. I told everybody that we could not do it in our generation, but in our children and grandchildren's generation there will be great people among Japanese settlers. If Japanese go back to Japan with money they made, that is the end. They would go back to the poor country and would live in poverty. That is no good. I said that to everybody even in camps, so people hated me. Our ancestors 8 came here about a hundred years ago and made plans to settle down, so we should become settlers. In order to plant our posterity here, we should educate them first, and then they should have strong faith. I told young people that those who have faith and can do things on their own are better than those who go to school by invitation. Some people thought I was too Americanized. I like to be Americanized. My son went to Valley Forge representing 28 Baptist church. I think that is natural. It is no good if only Japanese get together and do things. I tell my children that they should go into American world and become fine American citizens instead of becoming fine Japanese.

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I still remember that my mother told me to become an American. My children and grandchildren are all mixed. I tell them that is all right. They should bring their children up to be fine Americans. It is good to know that we are Japanese, but we should not act like Japanese too much.

I started farming 43 years ago. It is not good for children to have nothing to do, so after school I let my older sons level the ground by machine, and I let the younger ones do hoeing. My wife worked hard, too. I had a big family, so when everybody worked, the farming was done. If I were a carpenter I had to work by myself, and other people would have nothing to do. That would be no good for the children.

I built this house 43 years ago with my wife. We didn't have electricity then, so my wife held the lantern while I pounded the nails. We farmed in the daytime, and after we put the children in bed my wife and I built this house. I knew the carpentry. I worked as a shoemaker in the camp. There were about 5,000 people in Camp II, but there wasn't anybody to repair shoes. As my children were wearing out their shoes, I learned how to repair shoes and also helped others. I worked as a carpenter for a year, and a shoemaker for a year. In the third year I thought Japan would lose the war as Saipan fell, so I left the camp earlier. When I left the camp a year before the war ended everybody in Block 229 saw me off. As I worked for the block, the block manager presented me with a shirt and a pair of pants.

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I went to Kingsburg, Colorado where my brother was. I knew the man in charge of a dance hall, Mr. James Crawford. When we went to Colorado in April it was still snowing. I was a laborer. My wife did the thinning, topping and sorting onion. We worked there for a year, and bought an old car. Our oldest son had enlisted in the Army when he was 17, before finishing highschool. Our oldest daughter worked her way through the University of Michigan. She is a school teacher in Sacramento now. I sent all my children through college.

Q: What kind of difficulties did you have when you bought land here?

A: There wasn't any difficulties as my wife and I worked hard. We led a very happy life.

Q: About what time did you start working in the morning?

A: Sometimes we were early and sometimes late. Neither of us are early risers. We both were healthy and worked hard. We grew strawberry, and after that we have been growing grape for the past 6 or 7 years. We grew all kinds of things and found out that walnuts and grape were the best. Before that we grew peach, plum and olive, but they were not too successful, so we grow only grape and walnut. We have been growing grape for about 26 to 27 years. I was originally a farmer, so I know about farming.

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Q: You said you used to get up late in the morning. About what time did you get up?

A: When we had hired help, they started working at 7 o'clock, so we had to get up at 6 o'clock. That was normal. Sometimes we had about 7 Filipino workers when we were busy. Of course my wife and I had to work. One day we picked 100 boxes of strawberry and raspberry put together. It was around 1933 during the depression. Filipinos came here as they did not have jobs. The pay was \$1.75 a day working 10 hours, from 7 a.m. till after 6 p.m. It was hard work for them, but it was hard for us to pay \$1.75. The day we picked 100 boxes I figured up how much I made. I found out that I made 5¢ a box on strawberry. Raspberry was \$1 for 3 boxes. When I added up the profit, it came to around \$10, so I let them work. They worked hard, and we worked hard and kept up the work. It was around 1932 or 1933. The laborers stayed alive by eating napa cabbage. We worked hard but we were poor. Nevertheless we sent our children to school.

*Side 2* Q: What else do you remember about the depression period??

A: The depression started the year we moved there. We made money in Oak Park as we planted strawberry there early. That is why we could start growing strawberry here. We leased land in Oak Park, but we bought our land here. We didn't have much hardship, but we struggled through the poverty. We never thought it as hardship. Nevertheless we sent our children to school.

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Q: Weren't there many people in hardships in those days?

A: Yes, there were. Japanese have been living here for a long time. Some people came here from Oak Park, and have been living here for 22 years. They all had hardships like we did, but no Japanese lost their ranch as they worked hard. Almost all the Americans who lived around here lost their ranches. Except for Johhny Horn who manages a trailer park, I think almost all the Americans lost their ranches. A man named Menken grew peaches, but they were sold for only \$8 a ton, so he got angry and cut down all the peach trees and sold them for firewood. Not long after that Menken left here, and a Chinese farmer grew vegetables there. After he died, his son Larry Lim went into a box business. He is in his 40's, and he likes to come and hear my story. I tell him that it is good to send children to China to get education, but it is more important to give good education to children here. My brother and I have been living here the longest. Old people have all died. All the Americans from here to Sacramento have lost their ranches. Japanese who settled here have many children and grandchildren, and it is the age of the third generation now.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: I have nine children; 6 boys and 3 girls.

Q: How many children did you have when you went to the camp?

A: As I told you before, our oldest son joined the Army, but the rest of the children went to the camp with us. When we came back here, our oldest son was in the Army and the oldest daughter was in the college. I came back here with our third son, Aizo by train. When we came back to Sacramento there was no place to go. People were still living in this house. The windows were all broken. As we came here and worked everyday they finally gave up and left. Then I brought my wife and rest of the children back here and cleaned up the house. The ~~wae~~ <sup>was</sup> still going on, and we could not buy a stove. I picked up an oil stove, cleaned it and used it in the basement. We made a bare living. Three older children were out, but rest of them were home.

When I took my third son Aizo to Sacramento Highschool, the principal looked surprised and told me that he had to hold a meeting. I wanted to ask why, but I kept quiet, and left the boy there. There was already another Japanese boy in the school, and our son was the second one. I believed that there was no reason that Japanese children could not enroll in schools in Sacramento. Aizo looked surprised as he was timid. When I took George to kindergarten, a lady said, "That's all right. Leave him there", so I left George there. When he came home he told me that some children thought he was a Japanese, but some children thought he was a German. The children in turn went

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to schools in Sacramento, and older ones went out of state. I was worried about my son who went in the Army, but finally he graduated from college. As he was in the Army he received 5 point credit, and enrolled in the University of California. He received a degree in civil engineering when he graduated. He had a job in Stockton, and commuted 50 miles every day. His boss, Mr. Long was a generous man and was very kind to my son. He told my son to get a degree in civil engineering. Since he graduated from the university and received a degree in civil engineering, his promotion was fast, and now he is GS-14, the highest rank as an Asian. He goes to Denver often by plane to supervise. My son came home from the war alive. My sister's son was wounded on the back and has a Purple Heart. My son was wounded, too, but he doesn't have a Purple Heart. As he is an Army engineer, he goes to Okinawa and other places. Since he went to Okinawa, my wife and I went to Okinawa free. We were poor and had hardships, but we did not have sad experiences as my wife and I worked hard.

Q: How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I thought a grave thing has happened. My brother had a meeting with about 20 Japanese and told them that Japan would lose the war, and gave the reason why he thought so.

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He said that in olden days we could win the war by courage and perseverance, but we cannot win the modern war by them, because it is the total war. Japan is a small island country, but America has unlimited resources. If a small country like Japan fight against a big rich country like America, it will lose the war. It happened just as he said. Japanese around here know what my brother said when the war broke out. I wish my brother was Tojo. Millions of Japanese died, and my nephew, also, died somewhere in South Pacific.

Q: Did you think danger might come to Japanese around here?

A: I thought there was no use getting upset, but we should stay calm, so I farmed as usual. Japanese around here all did the same. On May 4 about 700 Japanese around here started evacuation. There was voluntary evacuation before then, and a group of Japanese went over the Rocky Mountain, but I read that they did not do well there. People around here were calm, we got our belongings and got on a train to evacuate. We were taken to Pinedale near Fresno, where we were fed flapjacks every morning. When we entered the camp I was glad. It was hard to feed 7 or 8 children, so I was grateful they fed us even with flapjacks and coffee. We did not have to work and we had a place to sleep. We had latrines and bathrooms. We stayed there till July. On July 4 we went to the relocation center in Poston, Arizona. We stayed there for two years.

Q: What do you remember about Pinedale?

A: I made up my mind to become an American even when the war broke out. I considered my 9 children, my wife and myself as Americans, so I told everybody to learn English, and I started a school. A young man named Abe read American history to me, and I taught English to some Japanese. I did my best to Americanize people in the camp. To be Americanized and work with Americans was my principle. I did not like, and still do not like for Japanese to work by themselves. I think Japanese should work together with the white people.

A long time ago, before I came here, a teacher of an agricultural school in Tokyo named Mr. Oshima came from Japan and travelled in Brazil. He showed us a movie in which some Italian settlers coming out to greet Japanese immigrants who were going to be in the neighboring settlement. After Japanese were welcomed, they went to their settlement and worked hard from morning till night wearing no shoes nor clothes. They did not associate with neighbors because they wanted to go back to Japan. Italians were disappointed because they wanted to build a country here together, but Japanese did not associated with them. After showing the movie Mr. Oshima said he was disappointed. At that time I thought we should not be like that. Whether Italians, Chinese or Japanese, we should work together and build a country. I thanked Mr. Oshima for showing me the movie. Mr. Oshima took some pictures of around here. I think

immigrants should not come here just to make money. We should become Americans, and bring up our children and grandchildren as Americans.

As you know, there had been no emigration policy in Japan. Japanese thought that they should be good and strong all by themselves. That is why Japanese Isseis were disliked by Americans. Japanese wanted to return to Japan and buy good land with the money they made. Then other people in the village were in trouble as there was only a limited amount of land available. I think it was not good as Japanese to go back to Japan with that kind of emigrant labor spirit. That is why my brother and I did not go back to Japan as it was not good for our posterity. My brother says nowadays, "We came to a great country." This country may fall someday, but this land will not, as there is unlimited <sup>m</sup>ount of food here. As I am a poor peasant's son, I think about livelihood first. I cannot work much now, but I stay here with that kind of feeling.

Q: What kind of hobby did you have in the camp?

A: I studied English, made shoes and learned how to play violin. I also joined the Haiku (seventeen syllabled verse) Club. I studied English in the adult education class. Miss Smith who was our teacher still sends me Christmas cards. A Japanese lady named Mrs. Yoeman taught us English first, but she had kidney trouble and died after an operation. After that Miss

Smith came and taught English to Isseis. I still write to one of my classmates, Mrs. Masago Nishi who is a teacher of waka (a 31-syllabled Japanese poem) in Japan. She still gives me instructions in writing waka. Recently she sent me a book she wrote on waka, so I am reading it every morning.

Q: Did you go fishing in the camp?

A: I had a fishing license, but I could not go fishing in the camp. Some people who used the trucks to break up the roads went fishing as their boss let them. We were not in that group. I worked as a carpenter for a year and learned about carpentry.

Q: What kind of place was Poston?

A: It was a 120,000-acre Indian reservation. As Indians are lazy they had barely cultivated 80 acres. When we went there, we grew big watermelons, fine honeydew and cabbages and filled the mess halls with them. My friend Mr. Ogawa was a graduate of an agricultural school, so he headed the chicken raising with Mr. Kamichika as his assistant. When the mess halls were filled with eggs, they went around distributing the eggs.

I started making tofu (bean-curd) so that everybody could eat tofu. As I did not have confidence in building a vessel and the stand, I asked Mr. Yotani who had evacuated from Fresno to help me build them. He taught me how to pound a long nail into one-inch board and I built a vessel and a stand. That is how

people in the camp could eat tofu and aburage (fried bean curd).

While Japanese in Tule Lake were having riots, people in our block worked hard in the 80-acre farm and grew big melon and other vegetables. As for flowers we grew <sup>+</sup>peunias in every barracks. When we entered the camp it was in the desert, and when the wind blew it whirl<sub>ed</sub> up the sand and almost blew away the barracks. Later it was so comfortable to live that everybody was happy and said, "There's no place like home."

Q: Where did you get the water from?

A: We got the drinking water from the well. Later when we grew lettuce, spinach and other vegetables Japanese made canal and irrigated water from Colorado River. After a year we could get lettuce, spinach, melon and all kinds of vegetable.

Q: Weren't there radicals in Poston, also?

A: Yes, there were. Those who did not want to join the service in our block went to Tule Lake leaving wife and children in Poston. Some people went to Tule Lake, but nobody went back to Japan. They all wanted to stay in this country. I tried to explain why they should not go back to Japan. There were many Christians, but not many attended church.

T: In some camp people got beaten up when they told others to become American citizens like you did.

S: In Poston, Mr. Kido was beaten <sup>up.</sup> At that time I was a member of the Law and Order Committee. That morning they came to get me before dawn. When I sent there, I found Mr. Kido beaten up with an iron wood. I know all the people who beat him up as I interpreted for them. They were mostly Kibeis and could speak English fairly well, but as they were excited they could not speak well. One of them was a son of a tofu maker. He was found innocent. The heaviest penalty was 4 months in jail. When I went there, the ones who beat Mr. Kido up had been brought there. It did not happen at the spare of the moment; it was premeditated. I was one of the five Law and Committee members. We expected that kind of thing to happen, so the committee held meetings and prepared for such incident. We had a policeman <sup>e</sup> hide in the laundry room in front of Mr. Kido's room day and night. That night the policemen were George and Paul, both big men. Around 2 or 3 o'clock Mrs. Kido started screaming, and Mr. Kido was fighting two men who were attacking him with iron wood. When the policemen woke up and rushed there, the two men started running away. The policemen grabbed their caps and pulled their shirts off. They fled leaving their shoes as evidence. The police department got the evidence. They asked the Law and Order Committee what to do. I told them that according to the W.R.A. regulation, the felony should be judged by the

military court in Yuma, and misdemeanour is judged by us. This is felony and not disdemeanour as we have the evidence, so we should leave it to the military court. Everybody agreed with me. The camp head and policemen put the men in the meat wagon. There were altogether nine of them, and I interpreted for them. One of them was my neighbor, so I excused myself from interpreting for him. They were questioned one at a time, and at the end they were told that if they give a name of the conspirator, their penalty would be reduced. Everybody gave a name so their penalty was reduced. The son of the tofu maker gave names of everybody so he was found innocent. The rest of them served a few months in the county jail in Yuma. The most penalty was 4 months. The Law and Order Committee accomplished its duty. In some camp they never found out the murderer, but in our camp the Law and Order Committee gave the names of people who committed the crime and had them punished.

At one time I was made a Japanese judge. The English judge was Mr. Sakiguchi and the chairman was Dr. Bill Ito. Every Saturday there was a trial of gamblers and bad boys. We did not handle felony cases, they were handled at the military court. We were thanked once for changing a bad boy into a good boy by our trial.

Q: What did you do?

A: In most cases bad boys did not have fathers. When we went to camp there was no family. They did not eat what mothers cooked, but ate at mess halls, so mothers could not do anything. When mothers tell them what to do, they would tell mothers to shut up. The judge told them that they could not do such thing. He told them to clean the latrine for a month. If they don't do that they would be put in jail, so they obeyed the order. In those days boys had short hair, but some boys did not get haircut or shaved, so the mothers complained. When the judge told them to, they got haircuts.

Q: Who brought them to the court?

A: The policemen did. The policemen brought bad people to the court and the judge gave the sentence. Sometimes when the policemen's complaint is not strong enough we cannot sentence them, so we let them go free. We were given books on trial procedures, so we conduct our trial according to the books.

Q: Weren't there any defense attorney?

A: There was a white chief of police. Mr. Hasegawa who graduated from Tokyo Imperial University and never worked before was the police commissioner.

Q: When a policeman brought a bad boy to the court, wasn't there anybody to defend him?

A: No, there wasn't. We didn't give them stiff sentences, We just admonished them by saying such thing as "Get haircuts as your mother tells you" or "clean the public bathroom for a month." All kinds of things happened.

Q: What kind of interesting cases were there?

A: There were many interesting cases. At one time I received an invitation to come to the police department for dinner. When I went there, they were broiling big T-bone steaks and rib stakes on charcoal, and girls dressed up in nice clothes served us. I thought it was wonderful compared to mess halls. When I asked where the meat came from, they told me not to ask that question. I found out that when the truckers brought the meat from Parker, they put them in the warehouse. From there there were supposed to go to messhalls, but some went to the police department for Bar-B-Q. We were Law and Order Committee member but we couldn't say anything.

On the other hand, the canteen got in hole for over \$2,000 by giving parties. I didn't know how they paid back the debt, but I think they did the same thing.

Some bad boys stole cooling system from other people's room and put them in their rooms. The policemen complained, <sup>they were</sup> but it was not a theft as it was somewhere in the camp. I could only tell them to return the coolers.

Side 3

The worst case was that policemen tore down empty barracks and made a baseball diamond. Mr. Hasegawa told me that policemen of my block tore down the barracks. The police commisioner said that it was an empty barracks that we didn't need, but it was not good for policemen to set an example in tearing down barracks. I told him that I will tell the policemen, but I never did, because they tore down barracks we didn't need, and built a baseball diamond that we needed. That was the camp.

Q: Did Anyone have a grudge against you as a judge?

A: Yes, I was given a hard time once. A man who could speak Japanese and English better than I wanted me to explain why a Japanese should try another Japanese. He was the chairman. I thought it was a good opportunity to give my explanation, so I stood up and explained. I said, "There are 5,000 people in this camp, so someone has to be a judge. The reason why your wives and children can walk safely in the camp at night is because there is a jucge, the Law and Order Committee and policemen. Do you want us to leave you alone, and nobody can go out at night?" After I said that about 300 people clapped their hands. I could hear the chairman say, "The situation has turned around." I won, and everybody agreed with me.

When we made camouflage nets, the councilor asked me what to do. I thought we should agree to make camouflage nets

for America as it was not like making weapons, We took votes in each block to see if we agree to make them or not. Some blocks agreed and some didn't. Everybody looked at me to see how my block voted. The chairman asked me how my block voted, so I said, "yes". As a matter of fact, it was 'no'. When we decided to make camouflage nets, only 5 people from my block went to work while the block that opposed sent 11 people to work. I was elected as the trustee, so when I signed my name, the bank paid \$50,000. We divided the money among the blocks, and paid the workers by percentage. The block which didn't work received same share of the money, so everybody received around \$5 in cash. The ones who agreed to do the project were hated as pro-Americans, but when they lined up to receive the money, the ones who opposed the project were all in smiles. As I had pro-American ideas I was hated by the block.

I attended the church in Poston II. Mr. KamichiKa and I were the heads of the congregation after my brother left the camp. It went on smoothly for two years.

Q: Weren't there any pastors?

A: There were four pastors: Reverends Takeda, Nojiri, Kitaji and another. I was the chairman of the funeral of Mrs. Yoeman who taught English at the camp. I stood between Revs. Noji and Kitaji. It was a fine funeral.

I had all kinds of experience. We left here in May 1941, and went to Pinedale and stayed there for 2 to 3 months. Then we went to Poston and stayed there for 2 years. After that we came back here. During that time we experienced all kinds of hardships, but both of us were healthy, so we struggled through leading our children. We left here empty-handed, but we came back here with a car.

When we came back here there was a fence around our ranch. They were raising 13 head of cattle there and were ~~bit~~ <sup>not</sup> growing anything. We took down the wire fence and grew cucumbers. Our cucumbers were so good that they were praised. The children all helped pick cucumbers, and by 3 o'clock we had picked \$70 to \$80 worth of cucumbers. Our children took them to a pickle factory and came home with about \$70. I am glad I farmed, for if I did something else, the children might have not been good. As the children worked with us, they did not go wrong, but grew up to be normal people. I tell everybody that if the parents do something else, and the children loaf around at home, they do not grow up to be good. We cannot think only about money. The parents should let the children do the same thing with the parents. I think it was good for my children's education and health that they farmed. My son was with the 442nd Regiment. Because of the distinguished service of the 442nd Regiment we could come back home. When the negotiations between Japan and America ruptured, 300,000 Japanese immigrants were forsaken. Immigrants are predecessors of Americans, so we should educate our children and grandchildren as Americans. We should Americanize so that we can get along with Italians,

Q: Are there anything else you remember about the camp?

A: Yes, there are, but there is no end if I talk about them.

T: That's all right.

S: When Mr. Kido was attacked, I interpreted, so I knew the names of the attackers. When I came back to the block, I reported everything I wrote in my notebook. Mr. Takeuchi was the councilman, and I was elected the judge. When Mr. Kido was beaten, he covered his head with his hands. The ironwood was long, so he was hit hard on his neck. If he had not covered his head with his hands, he could have been killed. Mr. Kido was taken to the hospital, and from there he was taken outside. I went to see Mr. Kido in Salt Lake City in March of 1944 on my way home from the camp. His daughter was with him, and told me that when she went home in San Jose, she found her home burnt down. That is why she was staying there.

Q: Where was Mr. Kido then?

A: He was the president of the Citizens' League, and was living in Salt Lake City. After we came back here, a barn of a Japanese in Loomis was bombed. I was afraid something might happen. People around here came straight from the camp, but we came here from outside. We went to Greeley, Colorado. Mrs. Uno, the secretary made arrangements for us to come home. She gave me lumber and rope. Army sent everything for me, so I brought

onion, potatoe and other food. My wife took the train with the children. Our third son and I loaded the car with canned goods, shovel and matches so that we could camp out if we had to. It was early part of March, and Pass was frozen, so hardly any passenger cars went through. Only tank cars went through about once an hour. At one time my son cried, "Dad, you are going too fast!" I slammed the brake which was bad, so the car spun around and hit the cliff. I was scared. Had I gone the other way I would have fallen 300 feet down. We just broke the fender. When we came up to the summit there was a gas station, so we stopped the car there and put on a chain and came down. Then the generator started smoking. I broke all the <sup>Cables</sup> lines by hand and ran on the battery. When we came to the next town I bought a rebuilt generator for \$12, had it put on the car and came here. When we came to Auburn I went to see if there is really a board that says, "No Japs" as it was written in the JACL magazine. It was there all right.

When I came home, white people were living here, and my family was not here. The people across the street told me that they were staying upstairs of a black family. I went there and came here to work every day. When I left Colorado I bought 5 gallons of gasoline on blackmarket, and that helped me a lot. After I came home nobody cashed my check for me, but a Yugoslavian named Mr. Dedon who installed pipes here always cashed \$50 checks for me. I became friends with him and his friends as he helped me when I needed help.

One night, the hops grower, Mr. King asked me to let Mr. Higashi who used to be his partner stay at my house when he came back from the camp because he was afraid the Mexican workers might set fire on his house. At that time my house was full, so I told Mr. King that I had no room for Mr. Higashi. White people around here welcomed Japanese, and there wasn't any trouble. Johnny Horn said, "Sato, I depend on you." I sent Mr. Furuike and Inoue to pick prunes, and sent my son George there for irrigation work. Nobody around here was excluded, and everything went on smoothly as Japanese were unobtrusive. We left the camp a year earlier than other Japanese, so we had that much experience. Of course we were both healthy, so we did thinning, topping and everything else.

Q: How many people were living here in this house?

A: One family was living here. They were raising cattle. They put fence around the field and had 13 heads of cattle in it. Only thing good about it was that the cow chips made good fertilizer, so cucumbers grew good.

Q: Did Mr. Inouye come here after you came back here?

A: Yes, he did. He went back to work at Robinson's, but he was not taken back as he had too many children. We felt sorry for them, and let them live here. They stayed here for two years. They had many children, about the same number as ours or one more. They have all grown up and are doing well now.

Q: How many children did Mr. Inouye have?

A: Nine or ten children. Later, when Mr. Inouye died, I gave a message of condolence at the funeral and praised Mr. Inouye. Mrs. Inouye was so pleased that she gave me a nice bathrobe. Inouyes had many children, but they all grew up to be good, because they experienced hardships. If the children grow up without experiencing hardship they are good, but when an emergency arises they do not know what to do.

Miss Hyoe who grew up in Tokyo and graduated from Aoyama Gakuin came here on her way around the world. When I asked her what she could do, she said she could type. I told her that everybody can type in America. I am a farmer, so I have work for farmers, but I don't have typing jobs. She said she wanted to do farming, so I let her pick grape. She stayed here from August till January. There was no work to do in winter, so I asked her if she wanted to go to our oldest daughter's in Indiana. She said she wanted to, so I let her go there. She was good at painting, so she learned to paint Japanese style painting at a college. She was there for a few months, and tried to find a job, but she couldn't. Then she went to New York and stayed at a home of a pastor's parents, but she couldn't find a job there. She finally went to Europe. When I went to Japan, she had come back to Tokyo after visiting 17 countries in Europe, and welcomed me. She is married now and lives in Afghanistan. She is trying hard to educate her

child. As she can speak both Japanese and English well, she works at the United Nations office as a secretary. She writes to me about every three months. She said she was trying to educate her son in Japanese way. I wrote and told her that she did not have to educate her child in Japanese way, but she should educate him as a fine Afghanistan citizen. She said the child speaks Persian and does not speak Japanese. I told her that she didn't have to worry. Send her to university and forget about Japan.

Q: After you came back from the camp, did you have to start all over again?

A: There is an episode about starting all over. One rainy day I passed by the Elliot's and saw Mr. and Mrs. Elliot fertilizing grape. They were not farmers so they could not do anything until their son George came home from South Pacific. I asked him if he wanted me to do the work for him, and he said he did. When I asked him how much he would pay me, he said, "half share." I knew the ranch well, as Mr. Yamamoto worked there before. It had prune, pearn and some grape. I had Mr. Inouye and his wife cut the pear. After I had the pear cut, I took them out and sold them. The income of that year was around \$2.000. As Mr. Elliot had a tractor, I plowed my brother's ranch with it and made beds to grow strawberry and tomatoe. When I made seedlings of strawberry, they were sold like hotcakes. When my wife and I picked strawberry, we were not fast but we picked about 20

boxes

boxes. A box was sold for \$4, so we made \$80 in cash on the field. When we took the grape and tomatoe to General Produce ran by Chinese, they bought them. Chinese worried about me and asked me if I had enough sugar. I had my daughter pick Mr. Elliot's plum. When Mr. Elliot took them to the General Produce and sold them, I asked for half the money he made. That way we made \$2,000 in the first year.

Q: What happened to Mr. Yamamoto who used to work at Elliot's?

A: Both Mr. and Mrs. Yamamoto died. After they came back from the camp, I had them stay at my brother's house. Later they bought a house on Jackson Road and lived there for a long time, but they died.

Q: Were the Ellitos living on Mr. Yamamoto's land?

A: The brother of Mr. Yamamoto's boss who had the General Merchandise owned the ranch. Mr. Yamamoto worked there for a long time.

Q: That is why you knew him, didn't you?

A: Yes. Mr. Elliot is still my good friend and welcomes me when I visit him.

Q: What else happened after you came back?

A: We were not excluded but were welcomed. Everything went smoothly.

Somebody in Loomis had his shed bombed, and some people in San Jose had their house burned. In Mayhue almost everybody came home and settled down, because people around here own land as I do. We all worked hard quietly, so there wasn't any trouble. It has been 33 years since we came back from the camp.

Q: How about the church?

A: I don't want to talk about the church for some reason. The church was burnt, and we needed a church, so we built a church spending \$3,000. As I was a carpenter in the camp, I bought the lumber and built the church with the help of Fred Furuki and Yoshio Iwase.

*Dan* Q: How long did it take for you to get your ranch back in shape?

A: After we grew cucumber and strawberry, it seemed it was back in shape, but I am still leveling the ground. I have to bring the dirt from higher ground to the lower ground so that I can water the field. I don't use a shovel any more. I use a ditcher of a tractor.

Q: Do you still drive a tractor?

A: Yes, I do. If I don't, nobody will. If I let my grandchildren work, I pay them. My daughter-in-law helps me, too. She is a white pastor's daughter. She would say, "Dad, I will come and pick strawberry," so I would tell her, "Come and help, and I will pay you." Dan's wife specialized in English in University

of Hiroshima, so she speaks better English than some people around here. She taught a grammar school in Alaska for several years. She is very intelligent, and she experienced hardship. She had experience with atomic bomb, so she has more endurance than other people. Even when it is very hot, she would not complain about the heat. She works hard very quietly. I am lucky to have good daughters-in-laws.

Q: Were there many single Issei men when you came here?

A: The married men left their children behind even if they didn't have money. The most worthless ones were tens and thousands of single men who ended their lives gambling. I knew many such men. I felt sorry when I read in the paper that they died without having wives. There were many such Japanese men.

I always tell people that the first person who shook my hand when I came to America was a Chinese. He was a good Chinese with long hair. I was a 14-year-old who could not understand English, but he welcomed me. This Chinese, also, died after spending all his life gambling. I did not attend his funeral, but my brother did. Not an American nor a Japanese, but this Chinese greeted me. It was in 1911.

I landed at Tacoma on June 30, 1911, and from there I went to Seattle. When I arrived at San Francisco from Seattle by a ship, it was July 4th, and firecrackers were popping on Grant Avenue. I was 14, and did not know what Independent Day was, so I was scared. My life in America started on July 4, 1911.

From Oakland I took a train to Napa. The big boss came to pick me up in his red car, and took me to the fruit ranch where my father was working. Japanese workers bought me a pair of work pants. In those days a pair of work pants was 75¢, and a shirt was 50¢. I was happy wearing the blue pants and a shirt. There were many cherries, and I ate so much that it brought on diarrhea. As there wasn't any work for a while I went fishing. I fished carps in Napa River, and had miso soup with carps in it. In winter I chopped wood, or went to chop down dead trees at Emery's in the neighborhood. Cherry season was soon over, and pear season started. I was 14, but I picked pear. I received a man's wages. In those days a day's wages was \$1.75. My father wanted my \$1.75. He made good money by getting my wages, his wages and his commission. He wanted to make a fine laborer out of me.

It was that winter that I started taking a private English lesson from an old American lady. She taught me an English reader used in American grammar schools. That was the beginning of my English lessons. Then my father sent me to an American home to wash dishes and clothes in order to study more English. I was good at farming, so the boss made me farm. When I did the pruning, the pear trees bore many pear, so I worked as a farmer. The boss told me if I farmed ~~he~~ would give me a raise. In those days I could speak English fluently. When my father returned to Japan, I became the boss succeeding him.

Q: Did you meet your father for the first time when you were 14?

A: Yes, it was the first time for me<sup>h</sup> but it wasn't the first time for my father.

Q: How did you feel when you saw your father?

A: I had written to him often, so I thought that was my father.

Q: What did you say to your father when you saw him?

Did you call him "father"?

A: I don't remember what I said as I was only 14. As my mother was poor, I helped her by pulling weeds among millets and cutting ears of wheat. My brother was not home, so I repaired the roof when it was torn. We made a bare living for several years.

Q: Were the lives of single men around 1920 to 1930 loose?

A: I used to go everywhere on a bicycle, so I saw everything. I was lucky I did not gamble or go the wrong way. I used to go on an errand to Chinese on a bicycle, I read English and Japanese books since I was young, so I did not go the wrong way.

Q: Did you think the older Isseis had loose morals?

A: I did not think so. I did not detest them, and I associated with them the same way as others. When Rev. Satomi Murakami of Lodi Buddhist Church was young, he taught me how to take

pictures. Now he writes Chinese poems in Nichi-Bei Times. He was born in Hawaii, and went to a grammar school in Japan. I came to know him when I picked plum with him on Grand Island, and picked tomatée at West Sacramento. I did everything, but I did not go the wrong way. Luckily I had a wife, children and grandchildren, so I walked in the right direction. Once you start gambling your morale becomes loose, and you cannot have a family.

Q: Do you know of many people who ruined their lives by loose living?

A: Yes, I do. Muneyasu was a good man. Noda was a gambler. They all died single. We gave funeral for my friend Ohkawa who died in the County Hospital. He was from Chiba Prefecture, and lived to his 80s. I know 4 or 5 of them. They were all single, and gambled till they died.

Q: Did they gamble because they were not married, or couldn't they get married because they gambled?

A: I cannot tell which; it is both. They were not bad people, but once they started they couldn't stop. When it rained, I gambled with others for fun, but not to make money, and if I made some money I bought gifts for others. I think when they are making money, they become obsessed with it and cannot stop gambling.

I know a Chinese who gambled till his 70s. He worked at the fruit ranch before my father came. When my father became the boss of the ranch, he took good care of this Chinese, and gave him a house to live in. This Chinese lived there until he died. He used to go out on Saturday, and came home late at night. He gambled until he lost. There was another Chinese, a cook named Fong. He gambled until he won. Fong saved money by gambling, and other Chinese lost money by gambling. Lucky gambled until he lost, and Fong quit when he won. I was still young, but I remember..Lucky knew English, Japanese and Chinese languages, and when he came home <sup>late at night</sup> he would say, "I won \$5", "I won \$10" and explained to everyone how he won. That was the life in camp when I came to America. Many young men ruined their lives by joining those people. I did not like that. so I did not gamble.

Q: Were there any gambling house around Mayhue?

A: I don't think there was one in Mayhue.

Q: Were they all in Sacramento?

A: I don't know if there was any in Sacramento. People in Mayhue owned land, had wives and children. They were farmers like us and lived here for a long time. Four families; Ogawas, Kitamura, Deguchi and Machida came here before us. They divided a big piece of land and started farming. They were the first ones.

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Before that Mr. Sakuma was there. Mr. Kawamoto, Yamashita and Kitagawa have been living here long. After them my brother and I came here. I settled down here first, and my brother bought 40 acres. Mr. Abe bought another 40 acres here. I started to buy land, too, but I didn't, as my partner went back to Japan. <sup>bad</sup>  
I took <sup>bad</sup> half of my brothers land as I thought that one person could not manage the whole area, but we might succeed if two of us work together. I always had an idea that it is better to farm steadily and in small scale than doing it a large scale and fail. I came here, dug a well, and started living here a year earlier than my brother. In the following year my brother ~~came~~ here and bought the neighboring land. Before we built the house, we were living in a barn.

Q: Were there rooms in the barn?

A: We made a boy's room here and some rooms upstairs. We divided the children and let them sleep here and there. In front of the barn was a horses' stall, a pump house and a garage. That winter we started building this house. It took us till April before we installed electricity and moved in this house. When we came home around midnight that Christmas, we found the house on fire. A drunken soldier had made a fire on the floor, and had gone to sleep, and the fire had started burning. I could have caught him and put him in jail, but I felt sorry for him as he was a young man, so I poured two buckets of water on the fire and quenched

the fire. The soldier woke up in surprise and ran away. I woke up my neighbor, Mr. Mc Donald, who called the constable. I repaired the building by myself.

Q: Was it before the war?

A: Of course it was before the war.

Q: Around what year was it?

A: It happened in 1932. As an immigrant I did carpentry and all kinds of work. I did not dig the well, but I did all the other work around here. As my oldest son Steve was in the Army, he had the priority, so we could buy a tractor for \$700. We bought a bath room of a former Japanese relocation camp for \$333, and had it sent here. I brought pipes and made a shower room. My wife and I did all the carpentry, and made the boys' room and a shower room. There were 7 toilets, so we sold some of them. Wife and I dug up two tanks which could contain 610 gallons, and brought them here. This son ran away from home when he was 17 and worried us, but because of him, my wife and I took a free trip to Okinawa.

Q: What was the religion of your family?

A: It was Shinto. The reason why we are Shinto is because of a stubborn ancestor who was a boss of laborers. He had a fight with Buddhist monks, so he became a Shinto. My brother's family is an influential Buddhist family now.

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Q: Before you came to America, what kind of a country did you think America was?

A: I received letters from my father in America, so I thought America is a country where many fruits grow. I did not think I would work as soon as I came to America, but I was put to work. I wish I had gone to school, but that's life. A friend of mine graduated from the University of California, but he died long time ago, and his widow is still alive. That is why I cannot say one will be fortunate if he graduates from a university. Sometime we will be more fortunate if we experienced hardships. I have no regret about my life. I think it was good. I am glad I became a farmer and brought up my children/

Q: What was your first impression of America when you arrived?

A: I was only 14, so I was scared of the firecrackers on 4th of July. I only thought it is a big country. I had an intention of going to school, but I didn't give much thought about anything as I was only 14.

Q: Do you remember anything about the ship?

A: Yes, I do. As we were immigrants, my bunk was above the bunk of a cute little lady named Mrs. Hashimoto. The ship headed for Seattle. It was June, but it was cold on the ocean. I planted the rice on June 13, and said good-bye to my neighbors

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who were planting rice. The last one I said good-buy to was Mrs. Yamazaki whose husband was in America. Then I sent to Yokohama and got on board a ship for America. I landed at Tacoma, and came to San Francisco from Seattle by a ship. I arrived at San Francisco on 4th of July. As I did not know about 4th of July I was scared of firecrackers.

I remember we had story-telling and drawings on board the ship. It was very cold. At one time the whip went through a storm, and the waves washed the ship's deck. I was scared. I also saw whales spouting water near the ship for the first time. When I was asked if I wanted to go to high school or go to America, I answered I wanted to go to America as I thought America was an interesting country. Of course I said that because I thought I could go to school. However, I did not stop studying. I went to adult school whenever I had time. Even after the war I attended an adult school in Sacramento with my wife for 8 months. It was not only for myself but for my wife. We studied American citizenship. I studied English in camp, too. That is why I understand young people. Rev. Matsuoka was surprised that young people liked me.

Q: Did you ever wanted to go back to Japan?

A: When I just got here I became homesick and used to dream about my schooldays or catching fish. In those days I wanted to go back to Japan. I went back to Japan after over 50 years with

with my wife. After she came here, we brought up 9 children. When we came back from the camp, everything was going well, so we went back to Japan. Since then we went back to Japan often. We went to Okinawa twice, so I know about Okinawa real well. I saw the monument of Ernie Pyle.

Q: Were you a member of the Japanese Association?

A: There was Japanese Association, but it was not ~~good~~ good. As my father was an officer of the Japanese Association I could get a passport of a non-immigrant.

Q: Did you belong to a prefectural association?

A: There was no prefectural association for the people from Chiba Prefecture as there were very few people here from Chiba Prefecture.

Q: Did you hear about Christianity when you were in Japan?

A: No, I never heard about Christianity when I was in Japan.

Q: When did you first start going to church?

A: When I was working with my father, the first boss died. The second boss, Mr. Rykoff was a Sundayschool teacher for 23 years. He had only 4 years of education, but he was an influential man in Napa, and served as a Sundayschool teacher for 23 years.

He asked me to go to Sundayschool, but I made excuses and did not go as I did not know anything about Christianity. I became friends with his two sons who taught me English, told jokes, and worked with me, but I missed the chance of going to Sundayschool.

After that I became a laborer and went from Oregon to Arizona. I worked in Fresno for about 3 years picking grape. When I was in Pomona, there was Mrs. Baker who took care of Japanese in the First Baptist Church there. I lived in her home as I was young, lonely and was searching for something. Mrs. Baker took good care of me and guided me. Mr. Hoffman taught the Sundayschool, and Mrs. Baker taught me American History. In those days there was the Nichi-Bei Kai, and young boys and girls seemed to have fun there, so I joined the club. At that time not many Japanese could speak English fluently. Frank Fukuda worked with me picking oranges. We were together at the Club, and at the church. I remember attending the funeral when Mrs. Baker's mother died. I attended the church every Sunday for about 6 months without getting baptized. Mr. Yarnell taught English at a highschool, and I attended it, also.

Mrs. Baker came to visit me at Poston during the war, but I could not meet her as I was busy doing carpentry. During the war I met Frank Fukuda and other people who worked at Sakai camp in North Pomona. We were very happy to see each other. Later, I met Frank Fukuda in Denver when I was dinnning. We look back on our past with nostalgia. We went to church together on bicycles. That was my church life in Pomona.

In Nichi-Bei Kai there were many people who were not members. After I settled down in Oak Park and became a strawberry grower, my wife, my brother's wife and I were baptized by Rev. Muraoka and became Christians.

Q: When was that?

A: It was on July 5th or 6th in 1928. Most everybody else were baptized at the Baptist Church in Oak Park, but we were baptized in a river.

Q: Mr. Hayashi was talking about you. Where did you meet him?

A: I met him at Poston. After my brother left for Colorado, I had to work for the church. I knew the wife of Mrs. Hayashi's son Shuki before they were married. She came to Poston as the head of the nursery after graduating from a college. They came to visit me after they were married. Shuki went to college after they were married. We are still good friends. In those days Mrs. Hayashi used to come to church and pray. There were many people so I didn't know everybody well. but they all knew me. Mr. Kamichika and I were the leaders in the church.

As I was a carpenter it was very convenient. When Rev. Stanley Jones came, Rev. Takeda asked me to make a big sign. Young people wrote, "Stanley Jones Comes", and Mr. Naozo Yamamoto and I made a 10 feet by 20 feet frame with cotton wood.

W We announced the meeting to everybody in the camp, and held a big meeting. Rev. Jones made a sermon, and Rev. Takeda interpreted it by his side. It was held at the Cottonwood Bowl, an outdoor theater. We put up the big sign which Mr. Yamamoto and I made by the church. I like to read Stanley Jones' book, "Abundant Living" and want to introduce it to Japan, but there is no Japanese translation of that book. I read it every day and I translate it. I was baptized by Rev. Muraoka on July 5, 1928. It has been a long time.

Q: How long did you stay in the apartment after you came back?

A: Not too long; about two weeks. We had beds upstairs, and we just slept there. As I came here everyday and worked, the people could not live here any longer and left.